



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Guadalupe Mountains
National Park

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Guadalupe Mountains News Release

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Guadalupe Mountains National Park to Host Mescal Roast

(Pine Springs, TX) Guadalupe Mountains National Park Superintendent Dennis A. Vásquez announced today that the park will host a mescal roast beginning Wednesday, May 1, 2013. The mescal roast will begin on Wednesday, May 1, 2013, with a traditional Mescalero Apache prayer and blessing at an earthen hearth for roasting mescal, which is located near the picnic area across the parking lot from the Pine Springs Visitor Center, at 2:00 PM. This event is open to the public. However, visitors are asked to not photograph or film the prayer and blessing.

Vásquez stated, “we estimate that there has not been a mescal roast in Pine Springs in at least 100 years, so we are happy to facilitate a return of this important traditional cultural practice to the Guadalupe Mountains. We look forward to even greater collaboration with the Mescalero Apache Tribe and other tribal groups who have long-standing historical, cultural, spiritual and traditional ties to the Guadalupe Mountains going forward.”

Mescalero Apache Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Holly Houghten stated “We greatly appreciate Guadalupe Mountains National Park in aiding the Tribe in the harvesting and roasting of the mescal (agave) this year. We hope that this event will continue and in future years the Tribe will be able to offer more events for public participation and education at Guadalupe Mountains National Park. Prior to being placed on the Reservation, the Mescalero people lived, hunted, and gathered in the Guadalupe Mountains. The Mescalero Apache School and tribal members look forward to the spring harvesting of the mescal as a way to reconnect with the Tribe’s traditional homelands and passing the cultural traditions on to the youth of the Tribe.”

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Mescal is a type of agave plant which is native to the Chihuahuan Desert. The mescal was an important staple for the Mescalero Apache Tribe, and the mescal roast is an important part of a longer coming of age rite for Mescalero Apache girls. The harvested mescal heads will then be placed in the earthen hearth, covered with soaked bear grass and burlap bags, then covered with dirt and left to roast. The earthen hearth will be opened on Sunday, May 5, 2013 at 9:00 AM and the roasted mescal heads will be removed at that time. The roasted mescal will be shared with park visitors who wish to sample it. Seating will be limited, so visitors are encouraged to bring a folding lawn or camp chair.

Weather may change quickly so dress appropriately. Make sure to fill your tank and bring plenty of food, water (at least one gallon per person per day, if you are hiking), snacks and sunscreen as there are no gasoline, lodging, groceries or food services available in the park. The nearest are 35 miles northeast of Pine Springs in White's City, 55 miles northeast in Carlsbad, 45 miles to the west in Dell City or 65 miles south in Van Horn. There is no public transportation to the park. Motorists traveling past the park along U.S. Hwy 62/180 may tune in to the park's Traveler Information Station at 1610 AM for up-to-date park information.

For more information about the 2013 Mescal Roast, please contact the Pine Springs Visitor Center at Guadalupe Mountains National Park at tel. (915) 828-3251 x2124, visit the park website (www.nps.gov/GUMO) or contact the Mescalero Apache Tribal Historic Preservation Office at tel. (575) 464-3005.

Park information, including park conditions, closures or restrictions, weather and program information, may be found on the park's website at www.nps.gov/GUMO/, on the park's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/GuadalupeMountains/, or by contacting the Pine Springs Visitor Center at (915) 828-3251 x2124. Free interpretive programs and guided hikes may be found on the Meetup page at www.meetup.com/Guadalupe-Mountains-National-Park-Meetup-Group/, on the park website or by calling the Pine Springs Visitor Center. To learn more about the Peak Fitness Challenge, see www.texasmountaintrail.com/hike/.

The Pine Springs Visitor Center is open daily (except for Christmas) from 8:00 AM until 4:30 PM. Be sure to stop by to get a map, site bulletins, brochures, post cards, books or film about Guadalupe Mountains National Park. The McKittrick Canyon, Frijole Ranch House, Dog Canyon and Salt Basin Dunes (Dell City, TX) Visitor Contact Stations are open intermittently. Please call the Pine Springs Visitor Center at (915) 828-3251 x2124 to find out whether they are open. For Dog Canyon, call the Dog Canyon Visitor Contact Station/Ranger Station at (575) 981-2418.

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